

Minutes
Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships
Tuesday, November 29th, 2016
1:30pm – 3:30pm
Smyrna Rest Stop
5500 Dupont Pkwy
Smyrna, DE 19977
United States

Attendees: Doug Gerdts, Michael Beals, Jennifer Hill, Paul Mathur, Kenneth Foster, Flora McConkie, Rich Walton, Steven Boone.

Doug called the meeting to order at approx. 1:45pm.

October 27th and November 3rd minutes approved.

Thoughts on Fall 2016 Events: Happiness expressed for the Interfaith Dialogue events with interest in creating more awareness that the Council conducts these kinds of events. Idea raised of possibly making Interfaith Dialogue events shorter in length. Interest in reaching out to Universities for conducting dialogues. A desire for bringing people to our events who are afraid to have religious discussion with their families has been acknowledged and set forth.

There was only a marginal turnout for the November 16th event. Had more difficulty than usual soliciting attendees for event. Positive feedback received from the children and parents. Presentation of event was lively and diverse; more diversity in presentation is desired for future events like: poetry, songs, dance, etc. Crowd was observed as a tight fit for Thanksgiving event. There was not any press for the November 16th event and the drafted press release did not end up going out.

Looking to possibly add a fourth question for the panel to the dialogues. Two additional questions have been created for the dialogues:

1. What value does your faith bring to the community?
2. How is your faith practiced?

Future Plans for Council for 2017: Looking to reestablish the importance of faith communities doing volunteer work to help the communities where the state and government cannot reach. Our goal is to connect faiths with state leaders. Council looking to establish a niche to build itself up as a Council on the come up. Want to utilize the power of networking and resource networking. Idea raised of applying ourselves to doing more creative things in trying to appeal more to the creative/right-brained people. There has been an interest raised in doing the Lunch & Learn

events as they went on with good success. Looking to create initiatives to reach youths. Increasing attendance for events. Reinforce that we are not looking to convert or solicit faiths, only to facilitate dialogue between all faiths. Work the press more to improve event attendance turnout.

Syrian Refugee Issue Update: Some organizations have already signed up. People had already begun arriving in Delaware in December. The number of people arriving could be greater than previously anticipated. Jen will be holding the info for interested parties. Point made that it is more than to just provide shelter and food there are other cultural aspects to consider as well.

Membership Changes: Doug will be stepping down as Chair and Michael will be the new sitting Chair. Doug will still be involved with the Council on a voluntary basis. Kenny Foster will also be departing as well. Interest expressed in getting Usman back on the Council possibly. There is a group interest in recruiting a representative of the Baha'i faith and a representative of Dennis Coker's Lenni Lenape tribe for new members. Reminder that the Council is not self-appointing and has to submit multiple candidates to the Governor for approval and decision. Point made that Council is primarily male dominant; interest expressed in recruiting more female members if possible. Michael will be forwarding the new member info to Jen for approval forwarding.

Additional Discussion: Interest expressed in creating a summary for Governor Carney explaining our purpose and goals. Interest in reestablishing a working relationship with the new Governor. Discussion over if Governor Carney will be changing our mandate and/or areas of focus. Large interest in new Governor attending Council events on a regular basis or "owning" the Council. Idea raised of creating a public access phone line. Current Council budget is exhausted as of the end of the 2016 year.

Next Meeting: Will occur around the second week of February of the 2017 year. An email reminder will be sent out once a permanent date and location has been agreed on. Flora has suggested having a meeting at Goldey Beacom College sometime during the 2017 year.

Meeting between Council adjourned at approx. 3:37pm.

Submitted by Steven Boone, Secretary, January 10th, 2017.